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KOTI WOMEN'S ALL SET TO BE

round noon on 7th March, Acheers broke out among students and alumni of the famed University College for Women, commonly referred to as Koti Women's. That was when the state finance minister T. Harish Rao announced an allocation of Rs. 100 crore for turning the Women's College into a Women's University.

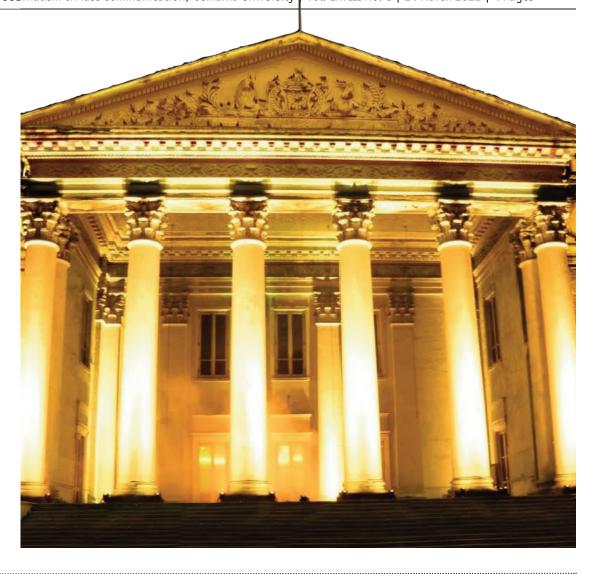
The move marks a major milestone for the College, which started in 1924 offering Intermediate Arts course. It was located at the 'Golden Threshold' residence of Sarojini Naidu on Nampally station road. It began offering graduate courses in 1935 and moved to the present British Residency building in 1949.

The Telangana government's decision to convert the College into a University was precipitated by a massive in-

crease in the number of women students entering post-graduate studies. This is in part a result of 46 women's residential degree colleges being run across the state by the Social Welfare department.

Koti Women's is wellplaced to accommodate the rising tide of women students, given that it is spread over 42 acres, located in the education and technology hub of Hyderabad, and offers 29 post-graduate courses in 17 departments, spanning almost the entire gamut of faculties, except Engi-

The long pending and much anticipated emergence of the College as a university comes to fruition as it races to enter its Centenary year in 2024. At the same time, it marks carving out of a yet another university out



JMC dept to train TV journos in tackling disinformation

Amisha Vaddi

Osmania University's Department of Journalism and Mass Communication has joined hands with the US Consulate in Hyderabad, to conduct an intensive training programme for Telugu TV journalists on tackling misin-

formation and disinformation.
The 90+ hour online and offline training programme will have sessions with Google-certified factcheckers, experts from India and overseas. At least 30 journalists nominated by various media houses from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh will be trained over a period of nine months, beginning in March.

Prof. Stevenson Kohir, Head, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, and Project Coordinator, said: "Tackling disinformation improves the quality of journalism. It changes people's perspective of false information, which undermines the facts and may create riots within moments.'

He added that disinformation is a serious threat to democracy, as mainstream, conventional and social media are falling prey to it, leading to various extreme consequences.

Coreena Suares, news editor at Newsmeter website and



Mr. Eugene Dae (centre), an official of the US Embassy at New Delhi, was on campus as part of the approval process. He was felicitated by Prof. K. Stevenson (left) and Prof. Karnam Narender (right), Dean (Social Sciences), after the review.

a core member of the training programme, said "This project" tions, video verifications, usprogramme, said "This project" ability of stat checkers and really helps the trainees in two main ways - first, it helps to counter the misinformation and disinformation, and second, it helps the journalists to be more credible. Hence, this is a vital project for the journalists who are working in the

She also said that the trainees will be educated in a wide range of topics, such as countering misinformation and disinformation, fact-checking, methods to factcheck, responsible reporting, tackling rumours, gossip and hoaxes, photograph verificamany more areas.

Dr. Ramu Suravajjula, a senior media professional and columnist, and a core member of the training programme, said: "As mainstream and social media is finding it difficult to cope with disinformation and they don't know which version to believe, now and then they telecast the wrong information. This project will really benefit in tackling disinformation".

On successful completion, the trainees will be given a Certificate and a chance to intern with International Fact-Checking Network.

A bridge to corporate jobs & overseas courses

Nirnitha Nannaparaju

smania University has established a new centre to enhance students' employability and higher education prospects by imparting a wide array of skills. Christened the Human Capital Development Centre (HCDC) will have a placement cell, a finishing

school and training centre.
Inaugurating the Centre,
Jayesh Ranjan, I.T. Secretary, government of Telangana, said: "India has a unique opportunity to benefit from its young peo-ple, who constitute two-thirds of the population. Higher education institutions play an important role in realising the demographic dividend."

Setting up of the Finishing school is a positive step which will help in identifying students' potential and groom them accordingly, Mr. Ranjan added.

Prof. K. Stevenson, Director, HCDC, said: "Employability has become the key outcome expected of higher education institutions and this is an effort to universalise placement training to meet the needs of fourth industrial revo-

The HCDC integrates separate units, placement directorate and other wings and would work in collabration with colleges, placement officers and industry representa-

Prof. D. Ravinder, Vice Chancellor, Osmania University, said the Centre was the first to take off among a host of academic reforms in the pipeline. Prof. R. Limbadri, Chairman, Telangana State Council of Higher Education, said the Centre was a good initiative and wish it success. Similar good wishes were echoed by Prof. Vedula Venkata Ramana, Vice Chairman, TSCHE.

The Centre has four coordinators — Prof. V. Uma Maheshwar, Dr. P. Muralidhar Reddy, Dr. A. Patrick, and Dr. K. W. Christopher.

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Need for caution in joining hands with Ed Tech firms

Santosh Esram

he University Grants Com-floated the idea of allowing collaboration between universities and EdTech companies, especially as part of online / open distance learning models.

This holds the potential of encouraging greater flexibility for students and greater access to technological tools for universities. During the Covid-19 pandemic, ed-tech companies have multiplied and expanded their offerings to students globally with their innovative ideas and strategies.

However, academicians caution that the objectives of publicly funded higher education institutions are wider in

Chintha Ganesh, Principal, UCASS, said: "Advancements are needed, and UGC should surely transform. However, collaborating with the private sector will not give social justice to the different



sections of people."

The private sector is profitoriented, and India is a diverse country with diverse economic backgrounds and geographical areas. Instead of collaborating with the private sector, we should strengthen the public sector so that the education will remain affordable, he said.

Prof. Karnam Narender, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, and former Director of Education Multimedia Research Centre expressed an academic concern. decision taken by the UGC is undoubtedly good but who will

monitor the syllabus taught by the Ed-tech companies? ... This collaboration must happen only after the initial set-up of the Monitoring or Vigilance Department", he told *Osmania*

Prabhakar Chouti, a re-search scholar and a faculty member in an Ed-tech company, said the government needs to be given complete authority over the Ed-Tech companies. Otherwise, the UGC may not control or regulate the Ed-tech companies.

He added: "Education is a social good. Ed-tech companies may become a monopoly and make it costlier day by day. So the UGC can acquire a particular technology, recruit professionals, and train them for public interest instead of giving to the private sector.

Surely, Ed-tech companies are technologically rich. Still, the government can also take the initiative to step into technology if it is concerned about bringing a change, he said.

Govt job hiring: Good, but could've been better

Opposition

parties are

citing Biswal

committee

figures to

question the

government

Gottimukkula Tejasai

Telangana chief minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao's announcement in the Assembly that the state government will release job notification to re-

cruit 80,039 vacant posts apart from regularising 11,103 contractual jobs has brought cheer to the aspirants.

However, cording to C.R. Biswal committee, C.R. there are 3,00,179 employees working in 31 departments in

the Telangana government against the sanctioned strength of 4,91,304. Which means there are a little over 1.91 lakh posts lying vacant in various departments.

Opposition parties are citing these figures to question the government. Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee president A. Revanth Reddy has demanded that the government should fill up the va-

cancies before November as KCR plans to go for early polls in December and the model code of conduct would kick in. He also demanded that the government should not collect

any registration or exam fee from candidates for the upc o m i n g notifications.

Telangana BJP president Bandi Sanjay Kumar claimed that only 80,000 jobs were announced in spite of there being 1.9

lakh vacant jobs. He demanded release of notification for all the vacant jobs.

Aspirants enrolled in various study circles expressed happiness on the announcement of job notifications. And they too demanded release of notifications to all 1.90 lakh vacancies. They also wanted a waiver of the exam fee and asked that the process be completed within a year.

When women rise...

Jyothsna M.

another International Yet another international Women's Day has gone by but there is a need for a collective effort to stand against objectifying women and domestic violence, and allow them to have their space to sum up themselves and march towards their unrecognised poten-

It is time to ponder these issues and seize the opportunities and soar in the societal ladder even as we women have a fair share of time tackling the trouble mongers in the society and extended family.

Juxtaposing thoughts, thanks to the all the men and different platforms created for all the opportunities from what it was in India decades back to what it is now. Just as women are vocal asking for their share of space and cooperative approach, the question is whether these efforts are adequate. Coming out of the shell, fear of being stigmatised should be dealt with by garnering courage to educate oneself, stand up and be able realise the potential make a difference to the family, community, nation and at the global level are a few more chal-

According to some comprehensive reports including 'Women Business Collaborative, WBC' survey, women in leadership have been able to successfully run their organizations towards the 'Fortune 500' companies. A rise in number of women in leadership is significantly more likely to outperform the ones lesser or no women in their leadership team. With gender diversity in leadership and women's liberation it is imperative that it leads the nation to greener pastures!

Russia - Ukraine war

A battle of nerves & narratives

Laxmi Prathyush Nallella

he ongoing war between Russia and I Ukraine is as much a war of words as of guns and missiles. On 21st February, Russian President Vladimir Putin gave a televised speech outlining how Russia sees Ukraine. He declared the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic as independent, sovereign entities, and went on to say that Ukraine was historically never a sovereign state, and that "modern Ukraine was entirely created by Russia".

Later, Putin articulated his percep-

tion that the West was supporting Ukraine to join NATO so that they can defeat Russia, just as Hitler and his accomplices did during the Patriotic War. He called the Ukrainian gov-ernment "Far-Right Neo-Nazis who seized power and are holding Ukrainian people hostage".

À close look at Putin's statements reveals how the Russian President has distorted the truth. A simple fact-check shows the capital of Ukraine, Kiev, was a thriving and prosperous city from the 3rd Century BC, long before Russia or the Soviet Union

was even created. His statement about the Ukrainian government being neo-Nazis who have far-right ideologies is a misinterpretation of facts. An organization called Azov Battalion in Ukraine does have extreme right-wing ideologies, but the party has received hardly 2% of the nation's votes and zero seats in its Parliament. Putin's statement on Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy being a neo-Nazi is untenable, given that Zelenskyy is a Jew and his grandfather, Semyon Ivanovych Zelenskyy, died to the Holocaust in Germany while serving in the Red Army.

Putin also expressed in several of his speeches after starting the war that he

was "liberating Ukrainians from the neo-Nazi President". But all he could see was stark resistance shown by the Ukrainian soldiers, politicians, leaders and even civilians alike. A clear example for this is the Ukrainian military, which has so many new civilian entries for being soldiers that they had to implement a waiting list for new applications.

On the other hand, Ukrainian president Volodymir Zelenskyy scored well on narrative and war fronts, by projecting grit and fortitude. Associated Press put out a story shortly after Russia started the invasion, on how Zelenskyy was offered an evacuation for himself and his

family by the United States of America, which he declined saying "The fight is here; I need ammunition, not a

On 27th February, Zelenskyy released on his social media handles a video of himself along with his ministers outside his presidency headquarters in Central Kiev, where he refutes rumours that he fled the nation, and vows to defend his nation until the

Putin's plans for this war neither worked in Ukraine, nor in Russia.

As Russia and Ukraine are culturally and philosophically very similar, the populations in both the nations consider themselves brothers and sisters. So, Putin described this war as a liberation of their fellow brothers and sisters from the horrid neo-Nazis. But footage from the war in Ukraine swept over the internet like wildfire, and Russians quickly realized the real side of this war, which sparked nation-wide protests to stop this war. Russian tennis players Andrey Rublev & Jií Veselý called for peace after writing "No war please" & "No war" on the camera lens and displayed their solidarity with Ukraine.

Digital varsity holds promise

Likhitha Shenoy

nion Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced incorporation of world-class digital universities in her recent budget speech. If this digital university takes off well, then it's going to be a game-changer.

The Covid crisis of the last two years has forced a switch to e-learning, including internet-based learning and skilling. It is indicative of the revolutionizing po-

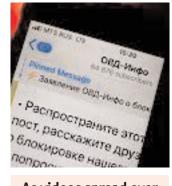
tential of Digital Universities.
According to NEP 2020, the gross enrolment ratio in higher education is 27%. We have to take it to 35% by 2035. Many of the students are dropping out of higher education in the middle to enter into business, homemaking jobs, and many others. To tackle all these issues digital universities are a way out.

A Webinar organised by Ministry of Education discussed the importance making education accessible to people, touching upon learning-management systems, experiential learning, peer group learning, digital learning, hybrid mode of education, virtual labs, etc. Speakers outlined the opportunities and challenges presented by the digital uni-

Courses like medicine and engineering will not be taught in digital universities because they require a practical lab. But financial management, data science, artificial intelligence, software engineering, and social sciences can be taught in digital mode. Interdisciplinary courses will also be developed here.

To make this successful all 6 lakh villages must be provided with broadband high-speed internet. Quality higher education in India is very less. The Digital University with hub and spoke model -which means the centre / core is surrounded by all other higher education institutions taking input from the digital university -- which in turn can collaborate to give certificates.

This digital university ecosystem might run on components like platform providers, content creators, and many



As videos spread over the internet, Russians discerned the real story of this war

Problems aplenty at new women's hostel

The hostel was planned to accommodate a certain number of people but the scenario right now is it is not sufficient for everyone who needs it.

Water shortage is the everyday reality. Water is being brought from elsewhere and it is not sufficient.

Sinks / wash basins are getting blocked, leading to stagnation of water, which spills into corridors.

There's only one tap for drinking water on the ground floor. It's difficult to go there every now and then just for the water.

Commuting is a big problem. We have to walk at least oneand-a-half kilometres to reach college on foot. We are exhausted by the time we reach college. We desperately need electric buses or some other suitable mode of transport.

By K. Sai Abhinaya & A. Prathyusha Kiran

Food is very limited in quantity and not good in taste. Students are completely put off by it. We need nutritious food in sufficient amounts.

Washrooms have sensor-based lighting. If one person has to go in, another person has to stand under the sensor for the light inside to be 'on'. This is impractical.



Centenary Hostel for Women. Photo: Laxmi Prathyush

Many inmates are complaining about being given three beds when there are four students in the room.

Plagiarism check goes mainstream

Ch. Rana Prathap

lose to four years after the ✓introduction of mandatory plagiarism checks for PhD theses, research scholars have developed their own ideas of what

Neeradi Sunil, a research scholar from Political Science department, said: "Plagiarism check is one of the best features to protect one's thesis from theft. Many scholars don't know about these checks." He suggested that the UGC should create more awareness about plagiarism among scholars.

'Plagiarism cȟeck is a gradual process. Sometimes it takes six months to get the plagiarism clearance certificate," said Nirmala, a research scholar.

Naveen Addala, a research scholar from Commerce department, said: "The Central University students have idea regarding plagiarism and plagiarism checks, whereas state university students don't. So, the UGC should take the initiative to spread the word about plagiarism checks and to make it familiar to the scholars'

The standard definition of plagiarism says it is the practice presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement.

Dr. A.S. Chakravarthy, head of Anti-Plagiarism in Osmania University, said OU introduced plagiarism check using Turnitin software in July 2018. Access to the software has been given to more than 900 faculty members in the University.

"According to the UGC guidelines, we are accepting only those theses which have below 10% of similarity index. If the similarity index is between 11-40%, the scholar has to rewrite the thesis within the next six months. If the index lands in 40-60% bracket, the thesis should be rewritten within the next one year. If the similarity index is above 60%, the thesis will be rejected and returned to the scholars. By this, our university gets quality theses," Dr. Chakravarthy said.

Veggies from the backyard



Fresh vegetables including cabbage, cauliflower, tomatoes, etc. are being grown in a small plot of land behind the Arts College with the initiative of the University's gardening department. The produce goes to VC's Lodge. Photo: Laxmi Prathyush Nallella

Great food and free wifi, say men boarders

Gugulothu Anil

While women boarders are struggling with various problems, especially at the new hostel, men seem to be having a good time, with free Internet access over wi-fi, modern washrooms, free access to swimming pool and to the gym. The only grouse students could come up with was that they need to walk 500 metres to get to their mess.

Abdul Siraj, a student of M.A Journalism, who stays in Kaveri (B), said, "The food in the mess is very good. Mess workers treat us very well. We can have unlimited food. This is the best thing in Osmania University hostels."

Banoth Ravinder, a student of History, and an inmate of Krishnaveni (B), also said that

the food was very good in every meal, from tiffin to dinner, and described Osmania hostels as the one of the best hostels in the state. However, students said the walls in Krishnaveni (B) hostel were not in good condition and that the road leading to Kaveri (C) hostel needed repair.

New hostel for Nizam College girls Navanitha Valluri

T.T. Rama Rao, Minister for IT and Urban Development, inaugurated the new girls hostel building at Nizam College in the presence of Education minister Sabitha Indra Reddy. The hostel, constructed in G+3 structure by HMDA at a cost of Rs. 8.5 crore, can accommodate 284 students in 71 rooms. Dr. C.V.

Ranjani, Vice Principal, said the construction of building was complete and that the security concerns of students were being addressed by having one entry and exit point and CCTV coverage. The proposal for hostel construction was made in 2017 by the then Principal Prof. Syed Rahman at the Annual Day meeting to KTR and received immediate nod from the government.

ChemFEST marks **National Science Day** Abdul Siraj

The Department of Chem-_ istry, Ōsmania University, celebrated National Science Day on 5th March by organising ChemFEST. The theme of the fest was 'Integrated Science and Sustainability reflects India's future course.'

Prof. V. Chandrasekhar, Di-

rector, TIFR Hyderabad, who was the chief guest, delivered a lecture on 'Chemistry -- The Central Science,' and said, "Ramanujan's achievements are an inspiration to all science students." He urged students to 'master the subject with practical knowledge and come up with innovative ideas." Prof. B. Satyanarayana, president, Indian Science Congress Sssociation, Hyderabad chapter, stressed the importance of scientific research towards sustainable development. He called upon students to avail all government schemes and scholarships. Prof. B. Veeraiah, Principal, University College of Science, Prof. U. Umesh Kumar, Head, Dept. of Chemistry participated in the event attended by over 200 students. The fest had events like Quiz, JAM, and E-Poster.

* * *

Hetero chairman donates Rs. 1 crore

Dr. Parthasarathi Reddy, Chairman, Hetero Drugs, donated Rs. 1 crore to Osmania University Chemistry Foundation for promotion of high quality teaching, research and renovation of all laboratories in Chemistry Department. Mr. Bhaskar A. Reddy, IRS (rtd), General Secretary, OUCF and Prof. Umesh Kumar, Head, Dept. of Chemistry, received the cheque.

Engg college goes for accreditation

Three post-graduate courses offered by the University College of Engg., namely, Automation Robotics, Production Engg., and Turbo Engg. are set to be reviewed by a team from the National Board of Accreditation this month. (*Nirnitha N*)

KHAJAGUDA

K. Shiva Sai Babu & Laxmi Prathyush Nallella

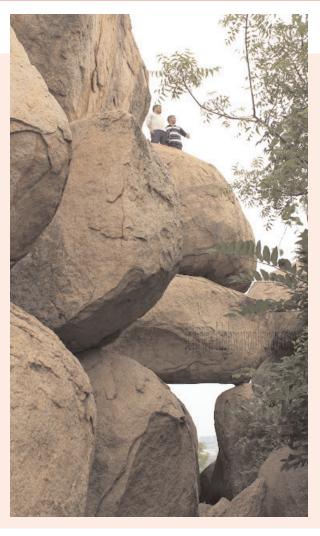
Weeks of protests by social media savvy citizens to stop the de-struction of rock heritage at Khajaguda have been capped by a series of government actions to protect them.

Khajaguda, also known as Fakhruddin Gutta, near Nanakramguda, has one of the most well-preserved rock sites in Hyderabad. These rocks are 2500 million years old, and were formed when

Earth's crust was cooling. These rocks are special as these kinds of rocks are found only in the Deccan Plateau. They are formed by molten lava, which cooled on surface. These rocks have unique formation with years of weathering.

According to the Society to Save Rocks, which has sparked the protests in Khajaguda since January 2022, the destruction of these clusters of rocks will ruin the flora and fauna around the area.

A representative of

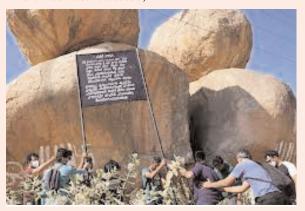


the organization said "The rocks near Kha-jaguda are our natural heritage. They balance the ecological scale of the area, and its destruction leads to an imbalance of the ecological scale, thus leading to destruction of the nature

around Khajaguda." Telangana IT Minister K.T. Rama Rao tweeted on this issue, and requested Arvind Kumar, Special Secretary of Urban Development, to enquire into the issue. The officer later tweeted,

saying a First Information Report (FIR) has been registered against three people who have encroached the rock for-mations in Khajaguda and the area VRA has been suspended for negligence and dereliction of

Rock organizations, rock climbers and nature lovers are happy that the government is taking steps towards saving the rocks, but are expecting the government to still meet their demands.



Covid leaves disruption, trauma in its wake

Laxmi Prathyush Nallella & Amisha Vaddi

ovid-19 has rattled the eduacation sector, sending the students and the faculty through turbulent and traumatic conditions. Educational institutions fell into turmoil due to the sudden surge of Covid-19.

Narayanan Ramaswamy, Narayanan Ramaswamy, National Leader of Education and Skill Development in KPMG India, said, "The pan-demic posed several challenges in public and private schools which included an expected rise in dropouts, learning losses, and increase in digital divide"
Students, faculty and univer-

sities alike faced a multitude of problems with the pandemic and its implications.

Dr. A. Anupama, Vice Principal, University College of Arts and Social Sciences, Osmania University, said, "Several stu-dents suffered through anxiety and panic attacks because of the pandemic. The uncertainty factor of both the faculty and the students induced severe trauma, leading to emotional disconnect between each other".

According to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, around 1.5 crore people lost their jobs due to the pandemic. Mohammed Ibrahim, a secondyear student of the English Department in Osmania University, said: "Students faced mental trauma and existential crises, and the additional loss of employment in the midst of a global pandemic pushed families into deep financial pressures. Students and scholars were seen selling fruits and vegetables on the streets, as their financial situations called for such desperate actions".

'Long hours on headphones sure to damage your ears'

G. Archana

Students using bluetooth, earpods, and headphones for long hours should know that it can cause a lot of damage to the sense of hearing, said B. Sunitha G. Kumar, founder and chairperson of Maa Institute of Speech and Hearing.

The Institute organised a free screening and awareness

programme on ear health at the Arts College to mark World Hearing Day on March 3. Around 100 students and 30 underwent staff members screening tests.

Communication is key to everything. When you hear, then only you can speak. So



hearing is most vital for human beings. Please don't misuse it by being on bluetooth and headphones for long hours,"

Ms. Kumar said.
Prof. C. Ganesh, principal, UCASS, thanked the ENT specialist, audiologist, and other technicians of Maa Institute for conducting the tests and pro-

viding medical advice.
Dr. A. Anupama, Vice Principal, UCASS, also lauded Maa Institute for the initiative and advised students to make use of the screening services.

Dr.C.S.Swathi, Assistant Professor, Department of Linguistics, said: "Nowadays most of the students are using ear-phones to listen to their online classes. Due to the prolonged usage of ear phones they may get health problems related to ears. Today's programme with subject experts will help students gain awareness on ear health." Students said the initiative was very useful in creating awareness on ear health.

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Editorial Trainees

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Assistant Editor Dr. B. Ramakrishna Asst. Prof. (C)

Rehash-and-release routine all around

Sai Rupini Nakirikanti

re remakes the magic Amantra to make a hit movie? Amitabh Bachhan's *Pink* was remade as *Vakeel* Saab in Telugu by Pawan Kalyan. It was a big hit. Same was the case with *Andha* Dhun (Hindi), remade as Maestro in Telugu, and Asuran (Tamil) which saw success as *Narappa*, while Kick (Telugu) made big bucks in the Hindi version as well.

Several Tollywood movies made their way to different industries like Bollywood, Sandalwood (Kannada), Kollywood (Tamil), etc.

Film buffs see positives and negatives in remakes. Some say the film makers remaking a film must be conscious of the soul and natural elements of the original film. For example, the Malayalam movie *Drishyam* was made in many languages and director



Jeetu Joseph was successful in retaining the soul of the film in all the versions.

Even in remakes, some filmmakers add some commercial elements to the film to cater to the demands of audience of that industry.

While many 'remake' movies were hits at the box office, some were praised by critics. Some couldn't make



their mark, including Bol Bachhan (Hindi), remade as Masala in Telugu, and Ishq (Malayalam) which had the same name in in Telugu.

It is good to watch remake films that offer good entertaining but the dependence on the remakes is not a good situation. Because viewers and fans expecting new and original from their super stars.

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belief.

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